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2/5 Ocoee River Project

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Building America's

Whitewater Center //



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Cherokee National Forest

in cooperation with

Tennessee Valley Authority

TN Ocoee Development Agency

Photo by Stewart Stokes

Forest
Service



Southern
Region

United States Department of Agriculture

The Ocoee

The challenging waters of the Ocoee River are bringing whitewater Olympics to southeast Tennessee.

The Ocoee River Project involves the planning and development of a 1/4 mile (.40 km)



segment of
the 40-mile (64.4 km)

Ocoee River for the 1996 Olympic canoe and kayak whitewater events, scheduled for July 26-28, 1996. It also focuses on rural development by assisting local communities prepare for potential economic growth associated with increased tourism to the Ocoee region.

More than a year of planning has taken place to develop a site that blends with the natural beauty of the Ocoee region while providing a full range of river activities during high and low water flows. In addition, an environmental study was completed in May 1994. It concluded that the environment in and around the Ocoee River could support the planned international events.

Partners in this project include the USDA Forest Service, responsible for site construction; the Tennessee Valley Authority, which controls

water releases through the channel; and the Tennessee Ocoee Development Agency, which is expected to operate the event in cooperation with the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.



The site master plan is to accomodate 15,000 spectators along the right bank of the river while the left bank supports all race management functions.

Five Phases of Development



The Bridge

Phase I May - August 1994

The first of two bridges was placed across the lower end of the course in July 1994 by the U.S. Army. This 150-foot, single-lane bridge will provide access to the river's left bank for construction and event operation. The oak decking for the bridge was donated by the Tennessee Forestry Association.

The second bridge will be constructed during Phase IV of the project.

The Course

Phase II September 1994 - May 1995

Construction of the competitive course and slalom gate system is the most challenging part of site development. Studies of the upper Ocoee found that a slalom course here would require changes to the channel width due to limited water availability. Boulders, weighing up to seven tons each, will be used to create a natural appearing levee along both sides of the channel -- narrowing the channel up to 50 percent in some places, while expanding the banks 20-50 feet.

TVA built a 300-foot, 1:10 scale physical model of the upper Ocoee to be used as a more environmental and economic way to experiment with channel designs. Sandbags and cobblestone were used by designers to represent the placement of

The Building

Phase IV March 1995 - March 1996

The core of the Ocoee site is an administrative building that will accommodate up to 350 people on three levels.

The highest level is located at the main entrance off U.S. Highway 64 and will provide information services for travellers through the Ocoee Gorge. The mid-level is located about 20 feet above the river and is the site of the event planning offices. The lowest level, next to the



boulders and rock fill creating various channel designs and bank widths. The overall objective was to create a continuous sequence of challenging (Class III) rapids along the course.

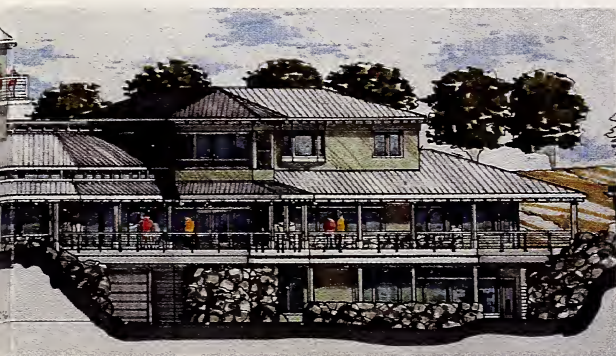
A computer model used the results from the physical model to show how to protect the course and the surrounding area from flooding.



river bank, is the race management and equipment storage areas.

A series of ramped walkways from the main parking area will lead visitors to the terraces along both sides of the river, the "Blue Hole," "Old Copper Road" and a 300-foot, cable-suspended bridge.

Landscaping with native plants throughout the site will also occur during this time.



The Terraces...

Phase III January 1995 - April 1996

Once channel modifications are complete, natural appearing terraces will be built behind the boulder levees. The terraces, stone walls and steps will be made with materials similar to those being used in the channel, to harmonize with the

"natural" setting. The terraces will provide viewing and race management space. A terraced rock wall along the right bank will minimize flood damage to the road. Much of this area will be covered by temporary bleachers during the Olympic Games.

International Events

Phase V March 1996- October 1996

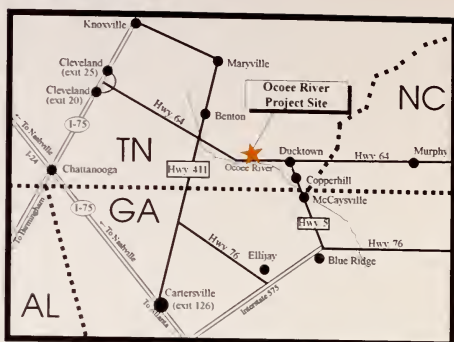
The final phase for development includes the placement of temporary facilities needed for the Olympic event in 1996.

The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) requires approximately 250,000 square feet of bleachers, tents and trailers to support the 15,000 spectators and 1,000 athletes and officials expected to attend the Olympic whitewater event.

The Tennessee Ocoee Development Agency will likely operate the site under permit from the Cherokee National Forest, during the Games'.

Following the Olympic Games, temporary facilities will be removed.

The Location



For More Information

--about the Cherokee National Forest, contact:

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Cleveland, TN 37312

(615) 476-9700

--about TVA's Ocoee River Operations, contact:

TVA Energy Communications

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Chattanooga, TN 37406

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--about TODA, contact:

Tennessee Ocoee Development Agency

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Benton, TN 37307-1996

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--about ACOG, contact:

Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games

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